



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Department of Education

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September 27, 1988

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Board of Education Members

FROM: Harold Raynolds, Jr.
Commissioner of Education

SUBJECT: Proposed Fiscal Year 1989 Operational Plan

On August 23, 1988 you were presented with a draft Fiscal Year 1989 Operational Plan for your preliminary discussion. Additional time was needed to determine how to achieve priority objectives given reduced funding levels. This attached proposed Operational Plan reflects the impact of the lower than anticipated funding levels for programs, services, and Department personnel, and is presented to you now for your final action.

This Operational Plan provides a general overview of our objectives for Fiscal Year 1989. The Plan reflects the Board's Goals for Education, its Mission Statement, and the five general priorities -- equal educational opportunity, educational personnel, early childhood education, management services and support to schools, and school finance -- included in the Department's Integrated Plan. A sixth priority area, efficient agency management, enables us to identify key Department management improvement objectives.

The major focus of the Operational Plan continues to be equity. We place a high priority on assisting the 30 districts and 149 opportunity schools with students at risk of academic failure; strengthening programs and services for linguistic minority students; increasing regional center outreach and technical assistance; strengthening programs that provide specialized services for students in the context of regular education and that assist in the transition from school to work; developing a state plan for services to homeless youth; expanding dropout prevention initiatives; and developing and implementing race desegregation plans. The Plan again emphasizes our efforts to monitor and assist the Boston Public Schools, as well as other major urban districts. Efforts to advance Board goals with respect to critical and complex school finance issues are also included.

The Plan builds on our ongoing efforts to implement major educational reform measures and Board policy in adult basic education, early childhood education, health education, testing, and remedial programs and promotes the implementation of new initiatives, including the Carnegie Schools. The Plan continues to expand our

efforts regarding educational personnel, including the appointment of an Associate Commissioner for the new division, teacher supply and demand strategies, teacher and administrator professional development, and the certification of personnel in areas of shortage. Finally, actions are proposed to strengthen internal program evaluation, complaint management, staff development, and special education program management.

However, decreases in funding have led to delay in implementation, reduction in level of effort, or elimination for the following objectives:

Delayed

- o Development and implementation of one- and five-year school improvement plans, particularly for opportunity schools. (I.A.1., p. 1, and I.A.2., p.2.)
- o Filling of some management positions in the Division of Educational Personnel. (II.A., p. 11.)
- o Development and promulgation of regulations for teacher certification standards under the two-stage process. (II.B., p. 11.)

Reduced Level of Effort

- o Expansion of the School and Pupil-Based Information Network (SPIN); technical assistance will be offered this year to strengthen school district automation systems. (IV.A.1., p. 14.)
- o Dissemination of information on educational technology. (IV.B., p. 14.)

Deleted

- o Initiation of the development and field testing of statewide transitional bilingual education writing test. (I.B.2., p. 3.)
- o Gateway Cities Program funding to assist refugee and immigrant students. (I.C., p. 3.)
- o Anticipated decrease in the number of magnet schools. (I.D.1., p. 3.)
- o Professional Development Schools funding. (II.F., p.12.)

I look forward to discussing this proposed final Plan with you.

HR/
Attachment

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Commissioner's Fiscal Year 1989 Operational Plan

A. Action Needed

It is recommended that the Board review and approve the Operational Plan as presented.

B. Rationale for Action

The Commissioner's Annual Operational Plan is a plan of action for the Department of Education to achieve specific measurable results during each fiscal year. A plan is necessary to ensure that the Board, Commissioner, and staff are directing limited resources to the attainment of objectives critical to the improvement of early childhood, elementary, secondary, and adult basic education in the Commonwealth, particularly given the Board's Mission Statement, Goals for Education in Massachusetts, priorities, policies (on early childhood education, adult education, and linguistic minorities), and recommendations, and the enactment of An Act Improving the Public Schools of the Commonwealth (Chapter 188 of the Acts of 1985) and An Act Enhancing the Teaching Profession and Recognizing Educational Achievement (Chapter 727 of the Acts of 1987).

C. Effects of this Action

An Operational Plan detailing specific objectives will enable the Board and Commissioner to set directions for the Department in critical areas, formulate strategies, and initiate appropriate actions.

D. Historical Background

The Commissioner's Annual Operational Plan -- based as it is on the Board's Mission Statement, Goals for Education, general priorities, program/budget initiatives, and resource allocations -- is the major effort of the Board of Education, Commissioner, and Department staff to advance education within the Commonwealth. For this reason, it is the key component of the Department's management and evaluation structure. The Operational Plan contains specific objectives toward which the Commissioner directs his efforts and those of Department staff, and for which each is accountable. The Board's Annual Report to the Governor reflects results that have been achieved.

The objectives in the Operational Plan generate a substantial part of the Board's agenda for the year by identifying topics for reports to the Board. These objectives also serve as the basis for Board seminars. A mid-year progress report is presented to the Board in January and an end-of-year report is made in June.



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I. EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

A focus on assisting schools and communities to provide an effective education for each individual from birth to adulthood -- particularly linguistic, racial, and ethnic minorities; those from low-income families; those at risk of underachievement, academic failure, or dropping out; those with special needs; and adults who lack basic literacy. Schools and adult learning centers will be assisted to create more positive learning environments; develop effective curricula; assess the strengths and needs of each learner on an ongoing basis; and develop strategies to serve students who at present are not adequately prepared, supported, or challenged, and adults whose academic background is insufficient for productive participation in the economy and society.

In FY89 our objectives will be:

- A. Strengthen Opportunity Schools and Districts with Students At Risk of Academic Failure, as Identified Through the Statewide Testing Program, and Those with Low Income and Minority Students
 - 1. Assist Schools and Districts to Develop Comprehensive Five-Year School Improvement Plans

The Department will assist schools and districts -- particularly the 30 districts and 149 "opportunity" schools in which the per cent of students passing all three of the basic skills tests ranked in the lowest quartile -- to develop and submit by March 15, 1989, for Fiscal Year 1990 implementation, comprehensive five-year school improvement plans to strengthen the capacity of schools and districts to provide support and challenge for poor and minority students. Assistance will be given particularly to Boston, Brockton, Chelsea, Fall River, Haverhill, Holyoke, Lawrence, Lowell, Lynn, Northampton, Springfield, Taunton, Westfield, Worcester, and selected vocational districts. Specific educational objectives will focus on overall educational leadership, assessing student strengths and needs, and making effective use of local, state, and federal resources. A progress report will be presented to the Board in June 1989.

2. Review and Assist in Implementing Comprehensive One-Year School Improvement Plans

Beginning in July 1988, the Department will review one-year comprehensive school improvement plans submitted by schools and districts and assist them in implementation, particularly those 30 districts and 149 opportunity schools in which the per cent of students passing all three of the basic skills tests ranked in the lowest quartile. A progress report will be presented to the Board in June 1989.

3. Design Procedures and Instruments for Assessing Academic and Vocational Competencies

The Department will continue to assist in the development of six comprehensive regional assessment centers and a model assessment package to determine the academic and occupational competence of students enrolled in occupational/vocational programs, and will present a report to the Board in Spring 1989.

4. Continue to Assist in the Development and Implementation of Comprehensive Educational Equity Plans

The Department will continue to assist Lawrence, Lowell, and Lynn to develop and implement comprehensive educational equity plans.

5. Develop and Implement an Action Plan for Equity at the Secondary Level

The Department will implement specific initiatives to promote effective secondary education for minority, low-income, and other at-risk youth, based on the policy recommendations presented to the Board in Fiscal Year 1988. A report will be presented to the Board in Spring 1989.

B. Strengthen Programs and Services for Linguistic Minority Students

1. Prepare and Initiate Implementation of Final Recommendations of the Policy Paper on Linguistic Minorities

The Department will prepare recommendations to be included in the final draft of a policy paper on linguistic minorities and present them to the Board in Fall 1988.

2. Implement Procedures for the Assessment of English Proficiency

The Department will continue to monitor the English language development of students enrolled in transitional bilingual education programs. School districts will report standardized test results to the Department annually. A progress report will be presented to the Board in Spring 1988.

3. Implement Student Learning Plans

The Department will monitor the use of individual learning plans, required of school districts beginning in Fall 1988, for all students remaining in a transitional bilingual education program for more than three years.

4. Assist School Districts to Develop Three-Year Transitional Bilingual Education Plans

The Department will assist school districts to develop and submit three-year transitional bilingual education plans for review.

5. Continue to Implement Two-Way Bilingual Programs

The Department will continue to assist school districts -- including Boston, Cambridge, Holyoke, Lawrence, Lowell, Springfield, and Worcester -- to develop or expand programs bringing together students dominant in English with students dominant in another language in order to develop proficiency in both languages, and to publicize existing successful two-way bilingual programs.

C. Provide Support for Refugee Students

The Department will continue to provide technical assistance to school districts to help them meet the needs of at least 10,000 refugee and immigrant students.

D. Reduce Minority Isolation in Schools

1. Develop and Implement Race Desegregation Plans

The Department will assist at least twelve school districts enrolling more than 70% of the minority students in the Commonwealth to implement race desegregation plans.

2. Promote Implementation of the Boston Public Schools Unified Plan for Vocational/Occupational Education.

The Department will continue to explore new initiatives to strengthen vocational/occupational education in the Boston Public Schools and will continue to monitor implementation of Boston's Unified Plan for Vocational/Occupational Education, including the governance of the Humphrey Occupational Resource Center, for compliance with Court Orders. A report will be presented to the Board in Spring 1989.

3. Continue to Assist the Boston Public Schools in Implementing its Unified Facilities Plan

The Department will continue to work closely with Boston school and municipal officials to implement the Unified Facilities Plan for the Boston Public Schools. A report, which includes recommendations for sixth year projects, will be presented to the Board in March 1989.

E. Develop Pilot Inter-District Choice Programs

One or more programs in which parents will have the option of enrolling their children in a school in another community will be developed. The Department will invite cities and their neighboring communities to consider the creation of such programs, with attention to equity, desegregation, and two-way movement of students. Legislation will be developed to support the broader implementation of such inter-district transfer opportunities, with appropriate safeguards.

F. Implement Legislation Providing for Educational Services to Homeless Youth and Adults

1. A state plan recommending policies and procedures to coordinate state and local school district educational services for children of homeless families and homeless youth will be developed and presented to the Board for discussion by April 1989 and for approval in May. The plan will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Education in June 1989.
2. \$119,000 will be made available for collaborative programs between adult learning centers and providers of services for homeless adults to address basic skills needs that may be acting as barriers to becoming self supporting. Programs will be evaluated and models for educational service delivery will be identified.

G. Strengthen Board and Department Actions to Prevent Students from Dropping Out of School

1. Provide Information on School Dropouts

The Department will collect data on actual annual dropout rates and develop four-year projections. A report will be presented to the Board and information on dropout rates will be made available to school districts in April 1989.

2. Prepare Dropout Prevention Policy Recommendations

A report on the degree of participation of districts with high dropout rates in state-funded dropout prevention and related programs, and dropout prevention policy recommendations will be developed and presented to the Board in March 1989.

3. Provide Leadership in Interagency Efforts to Assist School Districts to Reduce Dropout Rates

The Department will continue to participate in interagency efforts, including Commonwealth Futures, to coordinate dropout prevention initiatives, and will assist districts with high dropout rates to plan and implement systemic changes to reduce dropout rates and better serve students at risk of academic failure.

H. Strengthen Adult Education: Continue to Implement Board Policy on Adult Literacy

1. Develop Uniform Criteria and Standards for Adult Basic Education Programs and Evaluation Procedures

A broadly representative Program Effectiveness Task Force will determine programmatic needs for priority target populations; the critical elements of instructional programs; standards for program development and evaluation, including definitions of program levels and/or standards for entry to and exit from each level; and procedures for incorporating evaluation results in program funding decisions. An interim report will be presented to the Commissioner by December 1988, and to the Board in Spring 1989.

2. Complete Development of an Adult Basic Education Program Funding Allocation Procedure

A broadly representative Funding Task Force will identify current operating costs for various adult basic education program components, develop cost projections for proposed new components, and design allocation procedures that act to unify and stabilize funding/refunding processes used by all state agencies that support adult education programs. An interim report will be presented to the Commissioner by December 1988, and to the Board in Spring 1989.

3. Increase the Effectiveness of Adult Basic Education Program Instructional Personnel

A Staff Development/Certification Task Force, broadly representative of program service providers, will be established to identify qualities, skills, and abilities needed by effective instructors of adult basic education; and to prepare recommendations on the evaluation of instructional personnel, staff development efforts, and the feasibility of developing an adult education teacher certificate.

4. Strengthen Adult Education Instructional Curriculum and Test Administration

A broadly representative General Education Diploma (GED) Task Force will be established to develop recommendations on course curriculum; and on the preparation of approved testing centers to administer the new battery of GED tests, used to award high school equivalency diplomas, which will be implemented in Massachusetts beginning in November 1988.

5. Continue to Provide Leadership in Interagency Efforts to Strengthen Adult Basic Education

The Department will continue to provide leadership in working with the Governor's Adult Education Interagency Team, co-chaired by the Commissioner, to forge an integrated network of adult education services throughout the Commonwealth.

6. Develop a State Plan for Adult Basic Education

Department staff will develop a new four-year state plan for adult basic education based on recommendations of the broadly representative Department task forces, the Governor's Adult Education Interagency Team, and testimony from public hearings. The plan will be presented to the Board for consideration in April 1989 and for final approval in June, prior to submission to the U.S. Department of Education.

I. Improve Vocational/Technical Education Opportunities for Urban Students

The Department will review vocational/technical program delivery systems, and will develop strategies to improve programs in Holyoke, Lawrence, Lowell, New Bedford, Somerville, and Springfield.

J. Strengthen Curriculum in Vocational Education Schools and Programs

1. Field Test and Disseminate Applied Learning Curriculum

The Department will field test applied learning curriculum in communications and mathematics in twelve comprehensive and vocational/technical secondary schools, and results will be disseminated to vocational educators in workshops to be held in March and April 1989.

2. Develop Model Academic Curriculum

The Department will develop a model curriculum package for use in vocational/technical schools and programs. The package will include strategies for the successful collaboration of academic and vocational-technical instructors and for the effective integration of academic and vocational/technical competencies in course content and instruction.

K. Review Vocational-Technical Education Requirements and Develop New Regulations

The Department will develop draft regulations for Chapter 731 of the Acts of 1988 (An Act to Improve Vocational-Technical Education) and circulate them for public comment. The proposed draft regulations will be included in a report to be presented to the Board in June 1989.

L. Provide Leadership in Interagency Efforts to Strengthen Employment and Training Programs

The Department will provide leadership in working with the Department of Employment and Training (DET) to implement an interagency agreement to coordinate efforts to serve at-risk youth and adults; and to build stronger ties, at the regional center and school district levels, with the employment and training system. Reports will be made to DET in January and June 1989.

M. Promote the Development of School-to-Work Transition Programs

A statewide conference focusing on model programs currently in operation will serve as the basis for the dissemination of \$30,000 in technical assistance mini-grants to school districts. Funds will be used to develop new or improve existing programs designed to assist special education students in making the transition from school to the working environment.

N. Continue to Develop and Strengthen Efforts to Link Regular Education and Other Programs

The Department will continue to maintain current initiatives to promote mainstreaming of students with special needs, and others including gifted and talented students, and reduce the number of "pull-out" programs. A statewide conference focusing on middle school education will be held in November 1988, followed by program support and training to create building-based support teams for middle schools on a number of topics as well as to maintain teams in elementary schools.

O. Promote Special Education Compliance in Boston

In accordance with the Supplemental Disengagement Order in the state Superior Court case Allen v. McDonough, the Department will select a Boston special education monitor and will work with the school department and other parties to promote compliance with special education requirements and eventual disengagement of the Court.

P. Improve Services for Students with Severe Low Incidence Disabilities

\$540,000 will be made available for the development of community-based public and special education private school programs for students with traumatic head injury and autism, and for those who are deaf/hard of hearing.

Q. Assist School Districts and Special Education Private Schools in Providing Appropriate Special Education Referral and Placement Services

The Department will establish an Action Group on Special Education Issues to assist school districts and special education private schools by developing recommendations on the following: a definition of which students require special education services, guidelines for interpreting the "maximum feasible benefit" standard, strategies for strengthening pre-referral activities, and a definition of "educational" vs. "non-educational" services.

R. Improve Services to Students in Bureau of Institutional Schools (BIS) Programs

The Department will improve services to adolescents in Department of Mental Health and Department of Youth Services facilities by expanding vocational education opportunities in selected BIS special education programs, and by providing for needs assessments, inservice training, and curriculum development.

S. Continue to Target Monitoring and Assistance to School Districts and Special Education Private Schools with Outstanding Special Education Noncompliance Issues

The Department will continue to target monitoring and technical assistance efforts, focusing on program quality and placement in the least restrictive environment, to school districts and special education private schools with outstanding special education noncompliance issues.

T. Conduct the Third Year of Statewide Testing

1. Implement the Curriculum Assessment Program

The Department will report on the results of the second statewide curriculum assessment -- at grades 4, 8, and 12 in reading, mathematics, science, and social studies -- to the Board and all school districts in November 1988. The Department will administer a performance assessment to a statewide sample of 4th and 8th grade students in science and mathematics in Spring 1989 and report results to the Board in Fall 1990.

2. Implement the Basic Skills Testing Program

The Department will prepare and administer the third basic skills testing program at grades 3, 6, and 9 and retesting at the 10th grade in reading, mathematics, and writing in October 1988, and report the results to the Board and all school districts in March 1989. The Department will report the results of a survey of basic skills remedial practices, conducted in Spring 1988, to the Board and all school districts in Fall 1988.

3. Evaluate the Massachusetts Testing Program

The Department will design an evaluation plan for the Massachusetts curriculum assessment and basic skills testing programs, and submit the plan to the Board for its review and approval in Spring 1989.

U. Implement the Carnegie Schools Program

The Department will encourage the participation of schools in efforts to restructure them and will provide funding to seven schools, as well as technical assistance, in support of those efforts.

V. Strengthen Comprehensive Health Education and Human Services Programs

The Department will strengthen its comprehensive health education and human services programs by establishing seven regional and central office resource libraries to make available a wide range of health education and human services curriculum materials and resources. Training on prevention of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) will be provided to AIDS program implementation teams in 60 school districts. Department staff will continue to collaborate with other state agencies on policy and resource development, as appropriate.

W. Develop Policy on Programs and Services in Small Schools and Districts

The Task Force on Small and Rural School Districts will report on its first year of operation to the Board in August 1988. An advisory committee will be established to develop policy recommendations, based on further study of the needs of small districts, for the Board's consideration in May 1989.

II. EDUCATIONAL PERSONNEL

A focus on recruiting talented people to the field of education, on retaining high quality incumbents, on developing staff with promise, on renewing and sustaining those already performing adequately, and on improving the conditions of teaching. Special emphasis should be given to inservice as well as preservice education for teachers and administrators, to recruiting minorities, and to ensuring that areas of education experiencing (or likely to experience) acute teacher shortages are given priority.

In FY89 our objectives will be:

A. Continue Implementation of the Department Reorganization Plan for Educational Personnel Activities

The Department will move forward to implement the recommendations for the new Division of Educational Personnel that were approved by the Board in November 1987. A proposed candidate for Associate Commissioner will be presented to the Board in Fall 1988.

B. Implement Recommendations of the Joint Task Force on Teacher Preparation

Revised proposed regulations for the common teaching standards (II through V) of the two-stage certification process, and for pre-practicum and practicum field experiences for the provisional certificate will be presented to the Board for its consideration in November 1988, as will proposed regulations for certificate categories and levels. Proposed regulations for Standard I (knowledge) requirements, regulations addressing institutional standards, and a revised program approval process will be presented for discussion in Spring 1989. Final regulations will be presented to the Board for approval in Fall 1989.

C. Expand Efforts to Increase the Supply of Qualified Teachers in Areas of Need

The Department will continue to work with the other six state members of the Teacher Supply and Demand Common Market Project to support the supply and demand study, through funding and other assistance, and to improve the regional and state databases. The 1986 Massachusetts Institute for Social and Economic Research (MISER) study of teacher supply and demand will be updated to be compatible with other regional databases.

D. Strengthen Teacher and Administrator Preparation Programs in Areas of Critical Shortage

The Department will examine model programs in other states -- including California, New Jersey, and Texas -- that approve local school districts to offer, in collaboration with institutions of higher education, certification programs in areas of critical shortage, such as bilingual education. Department staff will work cooperatively with school districts and the Board of Regents of Higher Education to develop programs.

E. Establish Alternative Procedures for the Certification of Qualified Undocumented Educators and Bilingual Teachers on Waivers

The Department will develop alternative certification procedures and support services for undocumented educators and bilingual teachers on waivers.

F. Promote the Professional Development of Administrators and Teachers

The Department will continue to maintain its role in the professional development of administrators and teachers through the Commonwealth Leadership Academy, Commonwealth Inservice Institute, and other programs. Program emphases will include educational leadership, and the development of new structures and roles for school improvement.

G. Collaborate with the Board of Regents to Increase Minority Recruitment into the Educational Profession

The Commissioner will co-chair a working group to study and prepare recommendations on recruitment of minorities into the educational profession. Department staff will review the recommendations and develop a plan of action for Board approval in June 1989.

H. Implement Recommendations of the Study of the Preparation of Vocational Education Teachers

The Department will implement recommendations contained in the report of the study of vocational education teacher preparation in order to strengthen the pedagogical skills of trade instructors, academic components of vocational instruction, and inservice education. A report will be presented to the Board in August 1989.

III. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

A focus on strengthening and expanding the availability of early childhood education programs and services for all children from birth through age eight and their families, with an emphasis on at-risk 3- and 4-year olds.

In FY89 our objectives will be:

A. Assist Communities to Provide Early Childhood Programs for Children At Risk of Academic Failure

The Department will continue its efforts to assist communities, particularly those with significant numbers of children at risk of academic failure, to establish or enhance early childhood programs to increase access for all children, including racial and linguistic minority, handicapped, and those from low income families. The Department will continue its efforts to assist local school districts in placing young children with special needs in the least restrictive environment.

B. Provide Training on Early Childhood Curriculum

The Department will provide training opportunities and onsite technical assistance to school districts to interpret and implement the new Early Childhood standards.

C. Promote the Coordination of Services for Young Children and Their Families

The Department will collaborate with other agencies -- including the Executive Office for Human Services (Office for Children, Department of Public Health, and the Human Services Day Care Policy Unit) and the Special Legislative Commission on Early Childhood Programs -- to coordinate services for young children and their families. The Department will work with local educational agencies to increase collaboration between regular and special education staff members.

IV. MANAGEMENT SERVICES AND SUPPORT TO SCHOOLS

A focus on providing services to schools to increase their capacities to educate their students effectively, and to provide a safe, healthy environment for students and staff. Special emphasis will be given to developing information systems for planning, program management, and evaluation; to assisting schools to use educational technology for instructional purposes; and to facilitating collaboration with the public and private sectors for more effective service delivery.

In FY89 our objectives will be:

A. Improve Communications and Information to Schools

1. Strengthen School District Automated Information Systems

The Department will assist selected school districts to design and implement automated information systems in order to prepare for expanded implementation of the School and Pupil-based Information Network in Fiscal Year 1990.

2. Issue Reports Based on Chapter 188 Data

The Department will develop reports, using Chapter 188 data, on such topics as high school graduation requirements, class size, pupil-teacher ratios, teaching staff, and attendance-related indicators -- including school attendance, suspension, truancy, and non-promotion and make them available to the Board, Legislature, and Governor by June 1989.

B. Continue to Assist Schools in the Use of Technology for Instruction

The Department will continue to assist schools in planning, acquiring, and training for the use of technology in the curriculum for regular, special, and vocational education programs; and will continue to disseminate information on exemplary technology projects.

C. Facilitate Public/Private Sector, Interdistrict, and Interagency Collaboration

1. Continue to Increase Efforts to Develop Partnerships with Schools

The Department will continue to increase efforts to promote and facilitate the development of partnerships among schools and business, cultural, human services, higher education, school-age child care, parent, and other community organizations to address educational issues in the schools. A report will be presented to the Board in Spring 1989.

2. Improve and Expand Parent/School Partnerships

The Department will improve and expand parent/school partnerships at the school building and district levels by conducting training for teams of parents and administrators from selected school districts on developing and maintaining special education advisory councils. \$130,000 will be awarded for training of special education parent advisory councils.

3. Continue Efforts to Assist School Improvement Councils

Department staff will continue to expand their efforts to provide school improvement councils with information and technical assistance to help them work effectively in relation to school governance issues. A report will be presented to the Board in May 1989.

4. Implement Board Policy on Educational Collaboratives

The Department will develop and implement an action plan, including the provision of technical assistance in areas such as fiscal compliance, based on the Board's Policy on Educational Collaboratives. A report will be presented to the Board in May 1989.

5. Strengthen Regional School Districts

The Department will provide assistance to regional school district superintendents through the newly-formed Massachusetts Association of Regional Schools (MARS), and continue to work closely with the Legislature on regional school finance issues.

6. Collaborate with Framingham State College in Administering the Stalker Institute

The Department will work with the Stalker Institute of Framingham State College to provide quality educational programs for school food service personnel.

- D. Initiate Implementation of the Long-Range Plan for the Improvement of School Facilities

The Department will implement the first year of the long-range plan for the improvement of school facilities.

- E. Evaluate the Implementation and Effects of Chapter 188 of the Acts of 1985 (An Act Improving the Public Schools of the Commonwealth) and Chapter 727 (An Act Enhancing the Teaching Profession and Recognizing Educational Achievement)

A report on Chapter 188 implementation issues will be presented to the Board in August 1988, and descriptions of successful programs will be distributed to school districts in Fall 1988. The Department will evaluate the implementation and effects of Chapters 188 and 727, and will present a report to the Board, the Governor, and the Legislature in August 1989.

V. SCHOOL FINANCE

A focus on achieving equitable funding for public early childhood, elementary, secondary, and adult basic education, and on promoting funding formulas and grant programs to achieve and sustain educational improvement in the Commonwealth.

In FY89 our objective will be:

Expand Efforts to Promote Equitable Funding for Public Education

The Board and Commissioner will work with the Legislature to achieve passage of H.93, the Board's proposal to improve school finance. In addition, The Department's Committee on School Finance will study proposals to fund special education programs so that districts will be encouraged to provide as much service as possible in the regular classroom. The Committee also will initiate a study of new tax strategies and their potential for increasing revenues for education.

VI. EFFICIENT AGENCY MANAGEMENT

The state role is to establish policy, to administer state and federal education laws, and to provide leadership for early childhood, and public elementary, secondary, and adult basic education. In fulfilling this responsibility, the emphasis should be on efficiency and assistance as well as on regulation and monitoring. The State Department of Education should be an effective arm for carrying out the State Board of Education's responsibility to "support, serve and plan" education in the Commonwealth.

In FY89 our objectives will be:

A. Strengthen Teacher Certification Procedures

The Department will complete automation of certification procedures, and will improve services to applicants for certification.

B. Implement Recommendations of the Task Force on Automation

A report and recommendations from the review of Departmentwide and divisional automated information systems will be presented to the Commissioner in October, and an implementation plan will be developed and initiated.

C. Coordinate Planning and Implementation of Chapter 188 and Chapter 727 Programs

The Department will coordinate planning, development, program application/approval criteria, evaluation, and resource allocation for Chapter 188 and Chapter 727 programs.

D. Review Desegregated Education (Chapter 636) Program Approval and Evaluation Criteria

1. Develop Uniform Approval and Evaluation Criteria for Grants to Desegregating School Districts

The Department will adopt uniform approval and evaluation criteria for grants to desegregating school districts through the Equal Education Improvement Fund, Chapter 636, Section 1.

2. Develop Uniform Approval and Evaluation Criteria for Magnet School Grants

The Department will adopt uniform guidelines for magnet school development, implementation, and evaluation funded under Chapter 636, Section 8.

E. Strengthen Departmentwide Staff Development Initiatives

The report of the Task Force on Staff Development -- including a proposed Departmentwide staff development policy, plan, and statement of resource requirements -- will be prepared and selected recommendations will be implemented.

F. Strengthen Complaint Management Procedures

The Department will review complaint management procedures, prepare recommendations for improvements, and implement selected recommendations.

G. Strengthen Procedures for Private School Placement Accounts

The Department will review and monitor procedures and forms used to collect data on private school placement (60%/40% reimbursement) and make recommendations for changes as necessary. Quarterly program reports will be made to the Commissioner.